

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 are currently pending. The present amendment amends Claims 1 and 4 and adds Claims 5 and 6. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 4 can be found in the specification as originally filed, for example at page 9, lines 8-19, with corresponding Figure 4. Support for new Claims 5 and 6 can be found in the specification as originally filed, for example at page 8, lines 13-21, and page 9, line 23, to page 10, line 8, with corresponding Figure 4. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added.

The outstanding Office Action objected to the specification and Claim 4 due to informalities; rejected Claims 1-3 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,977,811 to Fleck et al. (herein “Fleck”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,512,670 to Boehme et al. (herein “Boehme”), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,038,717 to Dow et al. (herein “Dow”); and rejected Claim 4 as unpatentable over Fleck in view of Boehme, further in view of Dow, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,072,476 to Harada et al. (herein “Harada”).

In response to the outstanding objection to the specification, the title is hereby amended. It is respectfully submitted that the new title clearly describes the invention to which the claims are directed. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding objection to the specification be withdrawn.

In response to the objection to Claim 4, Claim 4 is amended to read “a switch button configured to switch a direction of the display, and the switch button is adjacent to the cursor key,” as suggested in the outstanding Office Action. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the outstanding objection to Claim 4 be withdrawn.

In response to the outstanding rejections of Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), these rejections are respectfully traversed by the present amendment.

Amended Claim 1 recites an information processing apparatus, comprising: a display; at least one cursor key for selecting an item; a ring of keys encircling the at least one cursor key, the ring of keys includes a common button functioning as both an activation button for activating a predetermined program and a determination button for determining the item selected from options appearing on the display while the predetermined program is activated, wherein the common button and the cursor key are provided near one end in an axial direction of a hinge pin between the display and a keyboard.

As explained in the Applicants' specification at page 2, line 5, to page 3, line 7, the Applicants' invention improves upon conventional information processing devices by providing an information processing device wherein different operations in an auxiliary input program can be performed without requiring the user to move his hands. Additionally, when the Applicants' information processing apparatus is used as a portable apparatus, the user can operate the common button and at least one cursor key while grasping the main unit with both hands. Further, as explained in the Applicants' specification at page 14, lines 14-22, and as shown in Figures 5 and 6, the user can operate the pointing device, the cursor keys, and the common button with a single hand while grasping the unit with that same hand. Thus, operability and usability are enhanced.

Turning now to the cited references, Fleck describes a keyboard with a mouse for a hand-held portable computer. Specifically, Fleck describes a portable computer 100 with a first portion 102 that includes a mouse button 300, right and left arrow buttons 302 and 304, and up and down arrow buttons 306 and 308.¹ Additionally, Fleck describes a plurality of hot keys that include a desktop hot key.²

However, it is respectfully submitted that Fleck does not teach or suggest "a ring of keys encircling the at least one cursor key, the ring of keys includes a common button

¹ See Fleck, at column 5, lines 1-25, with corresponding Figure 3.

² See Fleck, at column 6, lines 18-27, with corresponding Figure 3.

functioning as both an activation button for activating a predetermined program and a determination button for determining the item selected from options appearing on the display while the predetermined program is activated,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

Instead, Fleck describes a desktop hot key that is located to the left of left arrow button 304. Neither the desktop hot key, nor any of the other hot keys, encircle any of the right and left arrow buttons 302 and 304 or the up and down arrow buttons 306 and 308. The hot keys are instead located at a central portion of a keyboard 110, and therefore not easily activated by a user grasping the device described in Fleck.

Turning now to Boehme, Boehme describes detachable displays for portable devices. Specifically, Boehme describes that a detachable display unit for a portable device that is field replaceable and can be interchanged rapidly for service, upgrade, or more flexible use.³ However, it is respectfully submitted that Boehme does not describe the “ring of keys” defined in amended Claim 1.

Turning now to Dow, Dow describes an appliance and method for menu navigation. Specifically, Dow describes an appliance 22 with a flat panel display 24 along with user buttons 26, 28, 32, 34, 36, and 38, and user navigation buttons 42, 46, 44, and 48.⁴ The outstanding Office Action points to reference numbers 26, 34, 36, or 38, as shown in Figure 1A of Dow, as teaching a common button for determining an item selected from options appearing on the display while the predetermined program is activated.⁵ However, it is respectfully submitted that Dow does not teach or suggest “a ring of keys encircling the at least one cursor key, the ring of keys includes a common button functioning as both an activation button for activating a predetermined program and a determination button for determining the item selected from options appearing on the display while the predetermined program is activated,” as recited in amended Claim 1.

³ See Boehme, at the Abstract.

⁴ See Dow, at column 5, lines 19-32 with corresponding Figure 1A.

⁵ See the outstanding Office Action, at the last paragraph on page 3 continuing onto page 4.

Instead, as shown in Figure 1A of Dow, user operation buttons 26, 28, 32, 34, 36, and 38 do not encircle any other buttons. The user buttons 26, 28, 32, and 34 are located on a right side of the appliance 22 and user buttons 36 and 38 are located in a top center portion of the appliance 22. Therefore, an operator grasping the appliance would not be easily able to access all of the user buttons.

None of Dow, Boehme, or Fleck teach or suggest the “ring of keys encircling the at least one key,” as defined in amended Claim 1. Therefore it is respectfully submitted that Dow, Boehme, and Fleck fail to teach or suggest every element recited in amended Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 1, and Claims 2 and 3 which depend therefrom, as unpatentable over Fleck in view of Boehme, and further in view of Dow, be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 4 as unpatentable over Dow in view of Boehme, further in view of Fleck, and further in view of Harada, it is noted that Claim 4 is dependent from Claim 1, and thus is believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Harada does not cure any of the above noted deficiencies of Dow, Boehme, and Fleck. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 4 is patentable over Fleck in view of Boehme, further in view of Dow, and further in view of Harada.

New Claims 5 and 6 depend from Claim 1. As discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 is allowable. Therefore, as Claims 5 and 6 depend from Claim 1, in addition to reciting additional features not taught or suggested by the cited references, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 4 is allowable.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary in order to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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